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plus the guaranteed
$1 million prize
LOTTO 649
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Toronto metro

metroLIFE

Your essential daily news | WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2015 | High 3°C/Low 0°C More drizzle

Joe Hicketts celebrates with Thomas Chabot

SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

Canada learns not to take opponents lightly at world juniors after narrow shootout win over Switzerland metroSPORTS

No appetite for high food costs

STICKER SHOCK

T.O. restaurants feeling crunch of soaring prices

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

The next time you get your bill at a restaurant in Toronto, don't be surprised if it's more expensive than expected.

With food prices continuing to rise, local restaurateurs say it's only a matter of time before the added costs get passed on to consumers.

"The truth is that the cost of eating out has not risen with the cost of food," said Adrian Ravinsky, co-owner of 416 Snackbar and the People's Eatery in Toronto.

The cost of produce in Canada is expected to jump by at least four per cent in 2016, according to a new report from the University of Guelph's Food Institute. Meat prices alone — which already rose five per cent in 2015 — are slated to increase by 4.5 per cent.

"Meat's a big one, but it's really been across the board," Ravinsky said.

Tony Elenis, president of the Ontario Restaurant Hotel & Motel Association, said chefs and restaurant owners can boost their margins by manipulating their menus — but that trick only goes so far. "Right now because it's winter, you would usually have produce prices going up anyway," he said. "So a smart restaurateur might put more grains and root vegetables on the menu."

More than 80 per cent of produce consumed in Canada is imported, so the weak loonie is the main cause of the sticker shock, said University of Guelph professor Sylvain Charlebois.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

BIGGER IMPACT

At the Daily Bread Food Bank in Toronto, spokeswoman Sarah Anderson Austin said rising food prices are "a double whammy."

Those who already struggle to afford food will need to rely even more on the food bank, she said, but rising prices mean the organization's purchasing power is limited.

"We have to be more strategic about what we purchase," Austin said.

More on food costs in metroLIFE

Get to know Lolo

Lolo lives in colour

Lolo's dog has 5,000 followers

Lolo wears what works

Lolo doesn't skip breakfast

Lolo goes where she wants

Lolo is her own DJ

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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

Wednesday, December 30, 2015

Big hearts
Over the years, Canada has dealt with large numbers of refugees and gained a reputation for helping many who were fleeing persecution and civil unrest. **CANADA**

Murder charges to be upgraded

CRIME

Police believe stabbing occurred before robbery

Sanam Islam
Metro | Toronto

Charges are expected to be upgraded against the man accused in the Dec. 15 stabbing death of cancer researcher Mark Ernsting.

Calvin Michael Nimoh, 21, will be charged with first-degree murder at his next court appearance on Jan. 7, homicide detective Paul Worden told Metro.

Nimoh was originally charged with second-degree murder following the 39-year-old's death near Yonge and McGill streets.

Police believe Nimoh was trying to rob Ernsting.

"Through our investigation and evidence gathered, we believe the stabbing occurred first, which fits the definition of first-degree murder when you commit a robbery," Worden said.

Nimoh has also been charged with robbery, assault with a weapon and possession of a dangerous weapon in relation to a stabbing earlier the same day, police said Tuesday.

A 65-year-old woman was walking alone in the Yonge and Summerhill area at about 7:45 p.m. — three hours before Ernsting was attacked — when she was stabbed four times with a knife and her purse was stolen, police said. She has since been released from hospital.

Nimoh's girlfriend Tia Thompson, 24, and a woman who was a juvenile at the time of the incident are facing lesser charges, including robbery and assault in connection to that incident. They remain in police custody.

"The motivation was they were robbing people for money, and it turned violent, and we're not sure why," Worden said.

A memorial for Mark Ernsting, inset, was set up at 38 McGill St., marking the spot where he was stabbed near Ryerson University on December 15 during a robbery. METRO

THE ACCUSED

Calvin Michael Nimoh of Toronto, pictured above, is charged with stabbing and robbing two people earlier this month. Police say his girlfriend, Tia Thompson, helped him carry out one of the attacks. PHOTOS COURTESY TORONTO POLICE SERVICE

SCARBOROUGH

Man dies, 3 others sent to hospital after morning blaze

Myles Yard was just recovering after jumping from a second-floor window and kicking in another blaze downstairs when a stretcher passed by him. On it was his friend, Michael, lying unconscious.

Michael, who lived in the basement, hadn't heard Yard trying to rouse him from his sleep as flames engulfed the Scarborough home at about 6:30 a.m. Tuesday. While others battled for their lives, Michael — none of his housemates knew his last name and police have not confirmed his identity — died hours later in hospital.

"I watched them trying to bring him back," Yard said, looking at the charred remains of the Birkdale Road home where he had been visiting his girlfriend. "I was so shaken I had to leave."

By mid-morning, Yard had returned to the Midland Avenue and Ellesmere Road scene of the fire, which sent four to hospital, including Michael, another person who is still in critical condition, a 56-year-old man and a 35-year-old man who suffered minor injuries due to smoke inhalation and are expected to be released.

Firefighters estimated the property sustained somewhere between $200,000 and $300,000 worth of damage.

District Fire Chief Russell Jardine, who was at the scene, said firefighters arrived that morning to find flames spitting from the basement. Once they had been put out, the smoky trek to the lower level, Jardine said, was "like going down a chimney."

Fortunately, a handful of people in the residence's upper levels escaped and took refuge at neighbour Yleana Gomez's home, separated from the flaming house by only a driveway.

Michael Voltsinis, a neighbour on the street, knew two of the men who lived at the house and, as he watched fire crews swarm it, said, "It's a shock, because it could have been my house too."

Though some neighbours labelled the dwelling a "halfway house," Jason Bevan, who has lived there on and off for six years, described it as a simple home shared by many.

He called the house unsafe because of cockroaches, leaks, lack of insulation and a ceiling "about to fall in," but said, "We were all good people. It was family-oriented."

How the fire began is still a mystery. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

PETS

Hours after the fire had been put out, Jason Bevan said he still hadn't located his puppy, Lucky, who had somehow gone astray in the chaos. Firefighters said they rescued some cats and dogs from the house, but two perished in the blaze.

Firefighters come out of a burnt-out house after a fire at 130 Birkdale Rd. in Scarborough. TODD KOROL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

First snow delights young Syrians

SYRIAN REFUGEES IN CANADA
A FAMILY'S JOURNEY

Siblings enjoy slushy paradise while gearing up for new year

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

Some Torontonians may have greeted the season's first winter storm with a collective groan, but for many recently arrived Syrian refugees, the overdue snowfall was an event they'll not soon forget.

Mohammad, 11, and his younger brother Ahmad, 8, came to Toronto as refugees on Dec. 14. The two boys could hardly contain their joy Monday evening when the snow appeared.

"They immediately started calling 'come see, come see,'" said Dayna Callaway, whose family is hosting Mohammad, his four siblings and their mother, Tamador.

> **I'm sure that excitement won't last long, but it was quite a moment.**
> Dayna Callaway

The family had seen bits of snow before in Syria, but not enough to form big chunks on the ground.

"They were having fun, running around and smiling," said Callaway. "I'm sure that excitement won't last long, but it was quite a moment."

Seeing snow was one of many firsts for the family so far.

Part of Christmas was spent at a mosque, and the Callaways hosted a dinner party with 30 people.

The kids are now gearing up to start school, and the host family is already hunting for an apartment where they can live starting in the spring.

Their sponsoring group, A Good Start, continues to collect money in an attempt to sponsor nine more members of their family still trapped in refugee camps in Turkey.

Even in Tuesday morning's slush, Ahmad, 8, was still game for sledding outside the Callaways' house in Markham. CONTRIBUTED

Mohammad, 11, could barely contain his excitement about the first snowfall on Monday night. CONTRIBUTED

LETTER TO METRO

Mohammad describes his first time playing in snow

In a letter sent to Metro — and translated from its original Arabic — 11-year-old Mohammad describes his first experience with snow.

"My siblings and I played with the snow and it was very beautiful. It was a lot of snow that I piled up and over the ground.

"Coming from Syria, this was my first time seeing something so nice and fun to play in. It was the first time I played and had so much fun in something so natural. Praise be to God."

SPLENDOUR IN THE STORM

Toronto's first brush with winter was little more than a slushy — and somewhat treacherous — mess by the time people started the Tuesday-morning commute. But plenty of Instagrammers got in on the storm early enough to find beauty in the bluster. **LIZ BEDDALL/METRO**

1 @mrdelarosa13
2 @visionelie
3 @andrew_flores_realtor
4 @brunagross
5 @hazpazzz

Anchit Jain has added his voice to the people decrying the poor accessibility at a Mississauga Cineplex theatre. CONTRIBUTED

‘I just want to feel like everyone else’

Mississauga theatre at the epicentre of demands for improved accessibility

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

Anchit Jain is tired of feeling isolated when he goes to a movie with his friends.

Unfortunately, that’s the way things have always been for the 24-year-old from Mississauga.

“It brings an embarrassing feeling,” he said about having to sit apart from his friends at Cineplex’s Rathburn Theatre or having to ask for assistance to open a door and access an elevator or wheelchair ramp.

“I just want to feel like everyone else, you know. Sit in the middle of theatre and be with my friends.”

The Mississauga theatre came under fire last week when Chantelle Bernardo complained after being unable to sit next to her fiancé who uses a wheelchair. Now, others have come forward to share their concerns — and experiences — about the lack of accessibility.

In Bernardo’s case, Cineplex apologized, offered free tickets and later told Metro that companion seating would soon be added.

But, what Bernardo wants more than anything is a sit-down meeting with the company to explain the issues. No one’s responded to her requests, she said.

Bernardo said some of the people who’ve since contacted her have complaints about other Cineplex theatres in the area. They include bathroom sinks and diaper changing tables that are too tall in bathrooms.

“There’s an entire community of people who are experiencing accessibility barriers in your facilities, and if you do not feel like this is important enough to act on, then Cineplex will continue to be scrutinized for its discriminatory principles,” Bernardo wrote in a recent letter to Pat Marshall, Cineplex’s vice-president of communications.

Jain — who was born with CIDP, a neurological disorder causing weakness and impaired sensory function in the legs and arms — said every time he’s complained about issues, Cineplex apologizes and offers him two or three free tickets.

“You really feel bought off,” he said. “I’d like Cineplex to hear me out and pay more attention and fix these issues. I don’t care about free tickets.”

> **“I’d like Cineplex to hear me out and pay more attention and fix these issues. I don’t care about free tickets.** Anchit Jain

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TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

Mayor gives taxis a break in Uber feud

TRANSPORTATION

Beck grateful for proposed freeze on licensing fees

Mayor John Tory wants Toronto taxi licensing fees frozen at 2015 rates after Beck Taxi protested the annual inflationary increase, saying it's not fair to cabbies facing unfair competition from Uber.

"This will offer some modest relief to those paying the fees early in the new year," Tory said in an open letter to the budget chairman, Coun. Gary Crawford.

Kristine Hubbard, Beck's operations manager, thanked Tory for listening, a day after blasting the city for the impending 2.5 per cent fee hike.

"The intention to freeze increases on licensing fees is a first step in acknowledging taxi drivers in Toronto are facing undue financial burdens and are being asked to compete against an illegal operator," she said in an emailed statement.

In his letter, Tory asks the budget committee to recommend that council support the freeze, which "will reduce amounts needed to be refunded if, for example, the fees in question are in fact reduced under the new rules."

Council has directed municipal licensing staff to develop new regulations "to allow for a more viable and equitable competitive environment for taxis," his letter states.

Tory said the regulations are expected this winter and he expects they "will likely include alterations to those very same fees for cab drivers and owners."

Business licensing fees, including taxi licensing fees, are subject to automatic inflationary increases under the Toronto Municipal Code. Council has final say over any changes.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Taxi driver Mohammad Din protests against Uber in front of city hall. MELISSA RENWICK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

BRAMPTON

Uncertain who will pay bill for flooding

Brampton councillors are worried about who will cover the costs of a Christmas Day flood at the city's newly expanded municipal building.

Coun. Pat Fortini is estimating the damage done to the first and second floors at a "few hundred thousand dollars."

"One of the maintenance people said it was from the boiler system that heats up the floors and the rest of the building. It's like a radiator. It just blew. They had to open up all the walls," said Fortini, a former high-rise construction supervisor.

"I hope the builder's warranty covers this," said Coun. John Sprovieri, who's been critical of the city hall project. "Taxpayers better not have to pay a cent for this." BRAMPTON GUARDIAN

Brampton's city hall expansion has been a point of controversy for years. BRYON JOHNSON/BRAMPTON GUARDIAN

IN BRIEF

Officer charged with giving teen concussion

An OPP officer has been charged with assault after an incident in Toronto that left a 19-year-old Oshawa man with a concussion.

The SIU says the incident occurred July 1 when officers were sent to Highway 401 after the victim had car trouble. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Police often override default Taser settings

According to records obtained through freedom-of-information requests, shocks from police Tasers typically last five seconds each, but Toronto officers frequently override this default, opting for lengthy and sometimes repeated deployments.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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16 ways to ring in 2016

Metro's picks for New Year's Eve

Toronto offers up NYE options for all types. ISTOCK

FAMILY

Nathan Phillips Square
Enjoy a free DJ, dance and skating party complete with food trucks and hot chocolate. Then join in the countdown to midnight and fireworks.
100 Queen St. W.
8:00 p.m. to 12 a.m.

Roaring Twenties Christmas at Spadina Museum
Haven't had enough of Christmas? Step back in time to enjoy decor and food from the 1920s while you take a guided tour of the museum.
285 Spadina Rd.
Noon – 4 p.m.

Noon Year's Eve at Glam Gal Tween Spa
Get in some pampering time with the kids as you sip non-alcoholic champagne, get manicures and create your own jewellery before a balloon drop and dance party.
1213 Caledonia Rd.
10:00 am – 12 p.m.
& 12 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

First Night at Richmond Hill Green Centre
This family event will keep kids entertained all night with indoor carnival games, a magician, life-sized board games, live music and fireworks.
1300 Elgin Mills Rd. E., Richmond Hill
6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

WITH A TWIST

A real house party
Musical man about town Tim McCready hosts an annual New Year's Eve party at his actual house. There's the requisite laid-back vibe, plus DJ sets on the main floor and music from local bands like Fill Spectre in the basement. Tickets are $15 and, like any house party, it's BYOB.
159 Manning Ave.
10 p.m.

May the improv be with you
If you're still not sick of Star Wars, the Bad Dog Theatre is hosting an evening of improv comedy inspired by a galaxy far, far away. There will be champagne at midnight and dancing after the rebels blow up the Death Star. Tickets are $30.
875 Bloor St. W.
Doors 8 p.m., show 9 p.m.

Pig roast
Jamaican restaurant Patois is celebrating New Year's whole hog ... with a whole hog. They've teamed up with Smoke Signals Bar-B-Q for an all-you-can-eat pig roast. There are non-pork and veggie options available as well, and a glass of champagne at midnight.
794 Dundas St. W.
9:30 p.m.

An Amazon adventure at a secret location
Five + is being billed as "a journey through the Amazon" held at an undisclosed warehouse along Queen Street West. There's meditation, live DJs and a "culinary marketplace."
Tickets at eventbrite.ca
7:30 p.m.

SPORTS

Raptors 905
The Raptors have New Year's Eve off, but the franchise's Canadian Basketball Development League team will be in action. The 905 hosts Sioux Falls Skyforce on Thursday. All games are played at the Hershey Centre in Mississauga.
5500 Rose Cherry Pl., Mississauga
7:30 p.m.

Toronto Marlies
If basketball's not your thing, there's hockey on offer from the Leafs' farm team for people looking to get things started early in the day. The Marlies will host the Lake Erie Monsters on Thursday. Games are played at the Ricoh Coliseum arena at the Exhibition Place.
45 Manitoba Dr.
3 p.m.

World Juniors 2016
The Canadian team will spend New Year's Eve trying to get a win against Sweden, a matchup that could determine who finishes where in Group A standings. Canada has beaten Switzerland 3-2, crushed Denmark 6-1 but lost a heartbreaker to U.S.A. 4-2.
Helsinki Ice Hall
1:00 p.m.

Midnight Run and party
How about ringing in the New Year with a 5-km run, eh! For the fifth time in a row, about 500 people are expected to participate in the run/walk exercise taking place in and around Liberty Village. The journey culminates into the champagne, beer and hot food party ringing in the New Year till 3 a.m. The route is safe and free from traffic.
Liberty Village
MyNextRace.com

PARTY

Downtown Abbey at the Gladstone Hotel
Put on that extra rouge and get out your fanciest fascinator for this Edwardian-inspired bash, featuring themed cocktails, bands, DJ sets, a costume contest and a midnight surprise.
1214 Queen Street West
8 p.m.

Master T at The Smiling Buddha
The Smiling Buddha will be adding a nostalgic touch with Much Music VJ legend Master T hosting the evening's '90s themed party. Complimentary appetizers and a champagne toast at midnight are included with your ticket.
961 College St.
9 p.m.

Chronologic at The Garrison
Travel through time with a dance party featuring booty-shakin' music from 1890 to 2016 played in chronological order, spun by the venue's famous Goin' Steady DJs.
1197 Dundas St. W.
9:30 p.m.

Magic NYE 2016 at The Sound Academy
Check out music mash-ups with guests dancing the night away to the latest in Top 40, Hip Hop, R&B, Reggae, Soca, and lime hits spun by DJs Dzeko and Torres.
11 Polson St.
9 p.m.

BY THE NUMBERS

Long history of helping refugees

In recent years, Canada has developed a reputation for helping people fleeing persecution and civil unrest, signing in June 1969 the United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugees. In 1986, the people of Canada won the prestigious Nansen Award, bestowed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, for "their essential and constant contribution to the cause of refugees." Over the years, Canada has dealt with large waves of refugees. Here is a sampling:

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

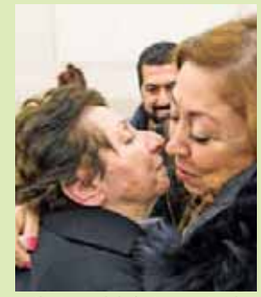
Czech refugee Jiri Janojsek and son Ivo.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A Ugandan Asian mother and baby in Montreal in 1972.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

This group arrived on a small boat which sank a few metres from the shore. CONTRIBUTED

Emis Leskovci, 10, celebrates at CFB Trenton May 5, 1999.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

An Iraqi boy stands in a garbage dump near the city of Karbala. GETTY IMAGES



Laila Saeed, left, is reunited with her daughter in Montreal. THE CANADIAN PRESS

10,975

The number of Czechs who came to Canada in 1968 after Warsaw Pact troops ended the Prague Spring. Canadians, institutions, universities and agencies stepped up to help with the resettlement.

7,000

The number of Ugandan Asians who arrived in Canada in 1972 after Idi Amin announced they were to be expelled. Canada set up an office in Kampala to process them. More than 4,000 came on chartered flights.

60,000

The number of South-East Asian refugees who resettled in Canada by the end of 1980. Thousands of Canadians welcomed these "Vietnamese boat people" under the new Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program.

5,000

The number of Kosovars who came to Canada in 1999 after the civil war. The UNHCR had asked for countries to offer safe haven to the thousands who had fled.

23,218

The number of Iraqi refugees Canada has resettled between 2009 and 2015 through government-assisted and privately sponsored refugee programs. Most of were resettled from their last place of refuge, Syria.

25,000

The number of Syrian refugees Canada has promised to resettle by the end of February.

SOURCES: CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR REFUGEES, UNHCR, CIC

We've typically had a military that can operate through the full spectrum of conflict ... often times punching above our weight.
Gen. Jonathan Vance

Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Jonathan Vance.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

General welcomes review

Canada's top general said he welcomes the Liberals' promised review of the country's defence policy but says the military must remain robust and equipped to handle a variety of threats in a world of "continuous conflict."

Gen. Jonathan Vance, the chief of defence staff, said events over the last year highlight the varied demands placed on the military. Those missions include transporting Syrian refugees, dispatching medical workers to help in the Ebola fight in Sierra Leone, a show of force in Ukraine and Eastern Europe against Russian aggression, and combat operations against Islamic extremists in Iraq and Syria.

"We've typically had a military that can operate through the full spectrum of conflict ... often times punching above our weight, and doing so with good equipment and superb people," Vance said in an interview.

Vance took over the top military post in July just ahead of the federal election that saw the Liberals sweep to power.

In their election platform, the Liberals promised a review of the military's role and capabilities, saying the Conservatives' Canada First Defence Strategy was "underfunded and out of date."

The platform sketched out a Liberal vision for the armed forces, saying it should be "agile, responsive and well-equipped," able to defend Canada and North America, respond to natural disasters and deploy on humanitarian missions, peace operations and combat missions.

The Liberals said there would be new focus on surveillance and control of Canadian territory and its approaches, especially in the North. Justin Trudeau's party also vowed to "vastly increase" training assistance missions to prevent the spread of terrorism and radicalization and pledged to recommit to United Nations' peace operations.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

IN BRIEF

Pilot dead, boy injured in crash of small plane

One man is dead and a nine-year-old boy is still in hospital following the crash of a small plane near Mascouche airport, northeast of Montreal. Police say they were the only two people on the plane when it crashed late Monday afternoon. The 40-year-old man died after being taken to hospital. The Transportation Safety Board of Canada describes the plane as a Mooney M20K.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Advocate urges changes to end-of-life care

The debate over doctor-assisted death could be the perfect chance for Canada to fix its broken system of palliative care — a "dark secret" that health advocates say has been quietly deteriorating for decades. Terminally ill patients and their family members are forced to take up the slack as a result, said Gabriel Miller, the public issues director of the Canadian Cancer Society. THE CANADIAN PRESS

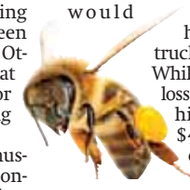
CRIME

Beekeeper stung by theft of large hives

It's a holiday heist that has an Ontario community buzzing with disbelief.

Two sizable hives holding some 30,000 bees have been stolen from a field in the Ottawa area, and the couple that cares for them is asking for the public's help in finding whoever is responsible.

Marianne Gee and her husband run the Gees Bees Honey Company, which rents bee hives to business in the capital region.



ISTOCK

A real estate company, Minto Group, rented two hives from the couple as part of its efforts to help the declining honeybee population in the area.

ISTOCK

When Gee and her husband went to conduct a regular check on the hives on Boxing Day, they found that the large wooden structures were missing, as were the bees living inside them.

"Both hives, the entire boxes, the bees, everything, they had been carried down quite a big hill," said Gee. "You could see footprints in the mud where someone had walked up and taken them and left. And they would have had to have left in a truck or trailer."

While the financial loss of the missing hives — about $400 to $500 each — isn't a huge one, Gee and her husband are more concerned about the well-being of the bees.

"Beekeepers don't move their bees in the winter," she said, explaining that bees cluster in a ball around the queen bee during cold weather, vibrating their wings for warmth.

"If the hive is moved in the winter, that cluster can get shaken apart and the bees can very quickly freeze."

Gee also noted that there would be just enough honey in the hive for the bees to get through the winter, but not enough to harvest.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Belgian police detain threats

BRUSSELS

Two suspects believed to be plotting Paris-style attacks

Belgian authorities announced Tuesday they have arrested two men and seized military-type uniforms and Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) propaganda in connection with a suspected plot to unleash holiday season attacks against police, soldiers and celebrated locations in Brussels.

The attacks under preparation "were the same style as those perpetrated in Paris Nov. 13," in which 130 people were killed and hundreds injured by suicide bombers and gunmen equipped with Kalashnikov-style assault rifles, according to an internal document from Belgian state security services cited by RTBF French-language television. Those lethal actions were claimed by ISIL.

The two suspects were arrested following searches Sunday and Monday in the Brussels area, the eastern Liege region and Flemish Brabant, the Belgian Federal Prosecutor's Office said in a statement. It did not disclose their names or further information about them.

During the searches, no weapons or explosives were found, but military-type training uniforms, ISIL propaganda material and computer equipment were impounded and are being examined, the prosecutor's office said.

It said the case was unrelated to the brazen and bloody extremist actions in Paris but that the investigation, which is still ongoing, has revealed a "threat of serious attacks that would target several emblematic places in Brussels and be committed during the end-of-year holidays."

The prosecutor's office gave no more details about the intended targets, but an official close to the investigation said that they included the Belgian capital's cobblestoned main square, thronged between Christmas and New Year's with shoppers and strollers, as well as a police headquarters in an adjacent street.

As of Tuesday, police and soldiers in Brussels are being ordered to take special precautions to ensure their own safety, Benoit Ramacker, spokesman for the Belgian government's Crisis Centre, said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Belgian soldiers patrol as tourists visit the Grand Place in Brussels on Tuesday. GEERT VANDEN WIJNGAERT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MYANMAR PROTESTS OVER MURDER VERDICT CARRY ON Myanmar nationalist Buddhist monks display placards featuring pictures of Myanmar migrants Win Zaw Htun and Zaw Lin. Hundreds of monks protested for a fifth day Tuesday against a Thai court's verdict sentencing the two migrant workers to death in Yangon, Myanmar. Htun and Lin were sentenced on Dec. 24 for killing British backpackers David Miller and Hannah Witheridge on the resort island of Koh Tao last year. GEMUNU AMARASINGHE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CONFLICT

Nuclear doom imminent: Expert

A former U.S. defence secretary is on a mission to warn of a "real and growing danger" of nuclear doom, troubled by the risks of catastrophe from the very weapons he helped develop.

Atop William J. Perry's list: a nuclear terror attack in a major U.S. city or a shooting war with Russia that, through miscalculation, turns nuclear. A terrorist attack using a nuclear bomb or improvised nuclear device could happen "any time now — next year or the year after," he said in an interview with reporters this month.

William J. Perry THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Perry, 88, chooses his words with the precision of a mathematician, which he was before entering the defence world in the mid-1950s. He played a central role in developing and modernizing nuclear forces throughout the Cold War — first as a technology whiz-kid and later a three-time senior Pentagon executive.

Perry looks at Russia's nuclear modernization and U.S. plans to spend hundreds of billions to update its nuclear arsenal and sees irrational nuclear competition.

"I see an imperative to stop this damn nuclear race before it gets underway again, not just for the cost but for the danger it puts all of us in," he said.

"We are facing nuclear dangers today that are in fact more likely to erupt into a nuclear conflict than during the Cold War."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Suicide bomber strikes Pakistani city of Mardan

A suicide bomber blew himself up outside a government office in a northwestern Pakistani city on Tuesday, killing at least 26 people and wounding 45 in an attack claimed by a breakaway Taliban group.

The bombing took place in the city of Mardan, outside the regional office of the National Database and Registration Authority, or NADRA, which issues identity cards, according to senior police officer Saeed Khan Wazir.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Murder convict beheaded

A Filipino murder convict was publicly beheaded in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday after failing to meet the demand of the Sudanese victim's family for payment of $1 million to save him from the death penalty, officials said.

Joselito Lidasan Zapanta's execution was carried out after his family and the Philippine government managed to raise closer to half the sum: $488,000.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Disguises fail to fool Mexican authorities

A Texas teenage fugitive and his mother attempted to disguise themselves and disappear among the American tourists who flocked to a Mexican resort city for the holidays, before they were arrested and set for deportation to the U.S., authorities said Tuesday.

Tarrant County Sheriff Dee Anderson said 18-year-old Ethan Couch, known for invoking an "affluenza" defence after a drunken driving wreck, and his mother — both detained Monday in Puerto Vallarta — had prepared to be gone a while.

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tico.ca Cuba

Startups tackle fake meat

FOOD

Progress slow on alternatives but investors see big payoff

Patrick Brown, a former Stanford scientist, is on an improbable mission: make a burger that Americans will love, but minus the meat.

Veggie patties have been around for decades, but Brown and others want to make foods without animal products that look, cook and taste like the real thing — and can finally appeal to the masses.

Brown's company, Impossible Foods, is part of a wave of startups aiming to wean Americans off foods like burgers and eggs, and their efforts are attracting tens of millions of dollars from investors. The goal is to lessen the dependence on livestock for food.

Mimicking nature

Southern California's Beyond Meat is working on "chicken" strips made with pea and soy proteins that have been sold at places like Whole Foods since 2012. But founder Ethan Brown concedes the product needs work. The Huffington Post described the strips as having an "unpleasant" taste that inhabits a "strange territory between meat and vegetable."

At Impossible Foods, the patty is made by extracting proteins from foods like spinach and beans, then combining them with other ingredients. The company expects the product to be available next year. Impossible Foods said it raised $108 million US in funding. Among its investors are Bill Gates, Google Ventures and Horizons Ventures.

Culturing meat

Another startup isn't totally ditching the cow. With $15.5 million US in funding, Modern Meadow in New York City takes cells from a cow through a biopsy and cultures them to grow into meat. It doesn't have a product on the market yet but gave a hint of the type of foods it might make by presenting "steak chips" for attendees at a conference last year. Only about 200 people have tried the chips, which they described as "crispy, crunchy beef jerky."

Hampton Creek Foods is on a mission to replace the eggs in products without anyone noticing — such as in its bottles of Just Mayo. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Banning the word 'vegan'

In San Francisco, Hampton Creek's mission is to replace the eggs in products without anyone noticing. To avoid perceptions its eggless spread Just Mayo won't taste good, Hampton Creek removed the word "vegan," from the label. The company says what makes the product different is that it tastes better and costs less — not that it's made with a protein from a Canadian yellow pea instead of eggs. Swapping out a single ingredient in a product may make it easier for people to swallow change. It may also make change simpler to achieve; Just Mayo's consistency and taste are similar to mayonnaise.

So far, Hampton Creek has attracted $120 million US in funding.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

VEGANISM

Options fail the taste test

How far have vegan alternatives come to tasting like the real thing? Not far enough, according to a panel that tasted some options. "Noxious" and "kind of not natural" were among the reactions to some of the meatless alternatives.

"If I were to eat this thinking it is a regular hamburger, I might think it's spoiled," said one taster after taking a bit of a "beefless" burger patty made by Gardein.

The fake chicken didn't fare much better. "It's just kind of rubbery. It didn't really taste like chicken," said another of Beyond Meat's Southwestern-flavoured strips of chicken.

Although the fake meats didn't go over well, the panel generally liked Just Mayo, the eggless mayonnaise by Hampton Creek. Everyone was able to identify it as vegan in a lineup of mayonnaises but thought it came close to tasting like Hellmann's.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Anoop Prakash heads up a Harley-Davidson subsidiary that's more closely integrated into the company's global operations.
HARLEY-DAVIDSON-DAN LIM PHOTOGRAPHY INC./THE CANADIAN PRESS

LOWER LOONIE

Motorcycle sector shifts gears

Canada's motorcycle industry is facing headwinds from the low loonie.

Bob Ramsay, president of the Toronto-based Motorcycle & Moped Industry Council, says the six big names — Harley-Davidson, Honda, Yamaha, Kawasaki, Suzuki and BMW — compete globally and have strategies to cope with currency fluctuations. "All companies are going to be trying to ensure that they can compete on price," he said.

Harley-Davidson, for instance, recently replaced a longtime distributor with a new Canadian subsidiary more closely integrated into the company's global operations.

Anoop Prakash, who heads the new subsidiary, says Harley-Davidson can use its global reach and currency hedging to offset the loonie's weak buying power — something its former distributor couldn't do.

Ramsay says the industry has been successfully adapting to the downturn in Western Canada and changing demographics. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Wednesday, Decem 2015

URBAN ETIQUETTE **ELLEN VANSTONE**

THE QUESTION

I am close with someone I really value, but they are always late. What should I do?

Dear Ellen,

I am close with someone I really value, but they are always late. Like, 40 minutes late for lunch, which makes me late getting back to work. Or late picking me up or meeting me, if they even show up at all. Now I'm worried about our relationship because I'm always furious with them, or feeling guilty about being furious in case they got into an accident or something. What should I do?

Sick of waiting, Edmonton

Dear Sick of waiting,

I don't usually recommend sarcasm as a communication tool, but your problem (though not you, I hasten to add) positively invites this approach, and it is effective at getting to the truth, so let's give it a go.

(Sarcasm alert)

You're feeling guilty? I should hope you would! I mean, what kind of terrible person would be irritated with a friend or partner just because they constantly leave you hanging like a gullible Charlie Brown in restaurants and on street corners and at clubs or parties? Don't you realize they have other, more important concerns besides you? Just because you show up on time (nerd), what gives you the right to expect them to do what they promised to do?

Clearly their time is vastly more important than yours, and I'm surprised they even bother having a relationship with someone who can't see this. For all you know, you're making them feel bad by being so punctual. Talk about selfish! Do you really think you're entitled to being treated as well as you treat them? Don't you realize that could end the relationship? Is that what you want? (End of sarcasm alert)

The question is not what to do about them, but to figure out why you put up with it.

Actually, maybe that is what you want. To end it. You seem to be aware that this person is not going to change. So the question is not what to do about them, but to figure out why you put up with it.

Possibility A is that you're getting something out of the relationship that makes the waiting worth it — in which case you should load up your phone with books and games for the thousands of hours you will spend waiting in years to come.

As for your anger, try to be more compassionate by looking to Internet science for explanations that justify chronic tardiness: They can't help being late due to an anxiety disorder, or excessive multitasking, or low self-esteem, or the kind of high self-esteem that enables them to stop and smell the roses while punctual suckers like you rush around like an idiot trying to make sure you don't inconvenience anyone else, you loser —

Oops, veering into more sarcasm there.

Let's proceed to Possibility B, which is: The relationship is not worth it, but you're afraid to end it even though you are furious all the time. The answer here is simple. Since anger leads to increased heart rate, arterial tension, fluctuating hormone levels, and cortisol flooding of the brain, which can all together be life-threatening, you are morally obligated to end the relationship for your own health and safety.

Granted, the breakup might also be stressful, no matter how politely you detach. But rest assured that once it's done, your flagrantly inconsiderate/damaged/whatever ex will always find some other poor soul to languish alone in bars and on street corners while they feel too busy and important to show up on time.

And you can move on to making plans with people who want to spend as much time with you as possible.

Need advice?
Email Ellen:
scene@metronews.ca

ROSIE DIMANNO
metroview

Whatever Toronto's weather, it's always silly season in news

It was another year of living stupidly.

Degenerates and desperados, dolts and dimwits. Hapless crooks and lawless cops: I can't spot the difference, can you spot the difference?

Sex was endlessly on the brain, the police blotter, and our not-so-smartphones.

The locally elected took themselves too seriously while the Maple Leafs took us for another laughable ride. Baseball was grand until the carpetbaggers from Cleveland arrived.

Teachers bullied and taxi drivers rebelled.

We fell in love with an illuminated T-O-R-O-N-T-O sign as if the city at the centre of the universe needed any more affirmation of its selfie conceit.

But we made it through another year, most of us anyway.

Herewith a look back at the sillier, seamier and screwier side of the past 12 months in Toronto and vicinity.

Pulp friction: Ryerson discovered to have two-tier toilet paper: Soft-to-the-touch for administration executives and one-ply for students.

Urine a lot of trouble: Pie-eyed pants-less fan rips a urinal off the wall at Rogers Centre, flooding the 500-level and disabling elevators.

Take a hike: Toronto's foremost tenants' rights group is forced to move out of its Carlton Street location after new landlord jacks rents by nearly 30 per cent.

CSI: Toronto: Tweet from Toronto cop: "If you built a tunnel near the Rexall Centre in #Toronto give us a call, K?"

Tunnel vision: Mystery tunnel revealed as "man cave" dug by two men in their 20s.

Saddle up: Previously unknown "slithering sperm" action — racing the fertilizing pack towards an egg — is discovered by a U of T research project. "You do catch yourself cheering for them," says David Sinton. "It's a little bit like horse racing."

Canucklehead: NDP leader Tom Mulcair calls Toronto "Canada's most important city" — while in Vancouver.

Bummer: A man convicted of mischief for videotaping the buttocks of bikini-clad women at Woodbine Beach is acquitted of voyeurism because the judge could not conclude the videos were taken for a sexual purpose.

Diamonds aren't forever: After their first post-season in 23 years, Jays make Alex Anthopoulos an offer he can refuse.

Ménage a twit: A person driving in the HOV lanes is caught with two dummies in the car.

Rosie DiManno is a columnist for the Toronto Star. **Rosemary Westwood** will return on Jan. 4.

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Andy Warhol's homoerotic film Horse screens at TIFF Bell Lightbox tonight

Hot pot is a perfect holiday meal for friends and family to gather around the table to enjoy. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Host a hot pot dinner party

ENTERTAINING

Guests share in the cooking of this communal Asian meal

It's the time of year to gather around the table for a hot pot. Here's your essential guide.

It's like Asian fondue

While many eagerly anticipate Sunday roasts this winter, lots of Chinese households are looking forward to hot pot. A form of communal dining, people gather around a big pot of boiling broth on a single burner and cook their own meats and vegetables. Think of it as Asian fondue, but instead of dipping bread in cheese you're swishing slices of fatty beef in delicious broth. It's easy to make — here's what you need to get started.

Soup base

Asian grocers sell soup bases containing peanut sauces or hot chilies, but it's easy to make your own. Keep it simple and clean-tasting by simmering a few slices of daikon and Chinese cabbage (just add to a pot of boiling water and let simmer for 30 minutes). Regional variations in China (not to mention other hot-pot hotspots including Japan, Vietnam and Thailand) have tomato-based broths, herbal blends or soups filled with Szechwan peppers.

Meats

The popularity of hot pot has led to Asian grocers selling pre-sliced meats including fatty beef, pork and lamb intended for the communal meal (T&T is a one-stop shop for this). If you can't find pre-sliced meat, slice a well-marbled cut of rib-eye or chicken breast as thin as possible against the grain. These are essential because they add flavour to the broth and cook in less than a minute: as soon as the meat is no longer red or pink, it's ready to eat. Try branching out to offal as well: Tripe, tendon, pig intestine, cubes of pigs' blood, thinly sliced kidneys, livers and beef tongues are popular hot pot ingredients.

Meatballs and dumplings

Hot pot meatballs and fishballs have a dense, bouncy texture when you bite into them. It's good to have a few floating around in the pot, ready to eat while something else is cooking.

Seafood

Shrimp, squid, mussels, shucked oysters, scallops, crab and fish such as salmon and bass cut into two-bite chunks are great for hot pot. Fake crab (surimi) is already cooked and only requires a quick dunk. I also recommend highly addictive fried fish skins. Eat them like chips, or dip them in the hot broth to slightly soften.

Vegetables

Leafy greens and root vegetables balance out the protein you'll be eating. Dump handfuls of lettuces, watercress and snow pea shoots into the pot until they wilt, three minutes or less so they maintain a bit of their crunch. Bok choy takes an extra minute or two. Cut root vegetables — lotus root, daikon, carrots and potatoes — into inch-thick slices to flavour your broth, or slice them into thinner pieces if you want to eat them after a minute or two of cooking. Taro requires less time to cook, and will disintegrate if cooked too long.

Mushrooms

Sliced king oyster mushrooms, shiitakes, hen-of-the-woods (maitake) or whole button mushrooms and bundles of shimeiji and enoki are ideal to soak up the broth.

Tofu

Opt for firm or extra-firm tofu so that it doesn't fall apart in the pot. Tofu puffs and bean curds provide a pleasant chewy texture.

Gluten

Wheat gluten (the main protein in wheat) is tofu's meatier and more flavourful cousin made from overworked dough.

Noodles

When the broth is this tasty, you have to have some noodles. Udon, ramen, rice vermicelli and glass noodles are the most common options. Put noodles into the pot for just a minute or two toward the latter stages of your meal when the broth has taken on the flavours of the meaty gristle and fat.

Dipping sauces

Set bottles of soy sauce and sesame oil, as well as jars of peanut sauce, spicy satay sauce, chili paste and hot sauce at the table with a small bowl for each guest to mix their own sauce. Add green onions to your personal bowl or beat a raw egg into your bowl. The egg is supposed to add a silky texture to the sauce, but consume uncooked eggs at your own risk.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

DIPPING INTO THE BROTH

Hot pot tips

- Throwing too much into the pot at once drastically lowers the temperature of the broth, which makes everything take longer to cook. Don't rush. Cook a bit of food at a time and keep the broth at a steady boil or simmer. Have a kettle or pot of hot water ready in the kitchen to top up the broth.
- Each guest should have two pairs of chopsticks: one for raw meat; the other for eating the cooked food.
- The smell of boiled meats permeates clothing; take off the blazer and fancy cardigan before sitting down to dinner.

WORD OF MOUTH

Biggest food news of 2015 and beyond

Theresa Albert
For Metro Canada

Food news gets more exciting every year.

Since the 1970s when the world's first diet recommendations became a thing, we have been learning more and getting more wrong each year. 2015 had its share of interesting headlines and trends. Here are a few that grabbed our attention:

• We all got a little more tasteful with the discovery of oleogustus. The Journal of Chemical Senses reported that there are now six taste sensations: salty, sour, sweet, bitter and umami can now be joined by the taste of fat, called oleogustus. Not to be confused with the sensation of fat which is pleasant; fatty acids are actually in the bitter or sour range. (Which feels like a circular argument so far — if they taste bitter or sour, are they really new tastes?) This may end up being a budding trend for manipulation by food manufacturers rather than for those who simply enjoy the taste of food.

• World Health Organization announces that there is indeed a link between meat consumption and cancer. The hyperbole reached a crescendo with both sides further polarizing the planet. On one end, the "I told you so" and on the other "I don't care, I am eating bacon." The truth lay somewhere in the middle.

• All eyes on the planet. With the COP21 Summit and our new prime minister's announcement that "Canada is back, and here to help" we can expect a sustainability agenda to be top of mind. Reducing waste is on everyone's agenda and non-GMO food seems to have gone from fad into mainstream consciousness. Denmark announced that they are planning to double their organic output despite the fact that they are a world leader to begin with. We still don't know how we are going to achieve these goals, but we sure don't deny that we should.

Theresa is an on-camera food and health expert, nutritionist and writer who loves to spread the word on food. Her videos can be seen on theresaalbert.com

Kick your NYE up a notch

RECIPE

Saltiness of salmon roe pairs well with bubbly

Upgrade the raw oyster plate with the addition of crispy Panko crumbs and salmon eggs bursting with sweet and salty brine.

Choose medium-sized oysters that are on the sweeter side, such as Kusshi oysters.

If you don't want to splurge on the salmon eggs (expect to pay $13 to $16 for a small jar) opt for capelin roe, which is a fraction of the price.

These eggs are much tinier and add more of a crunchy texture but have much less of that desirable briny kick.

Ingredients:

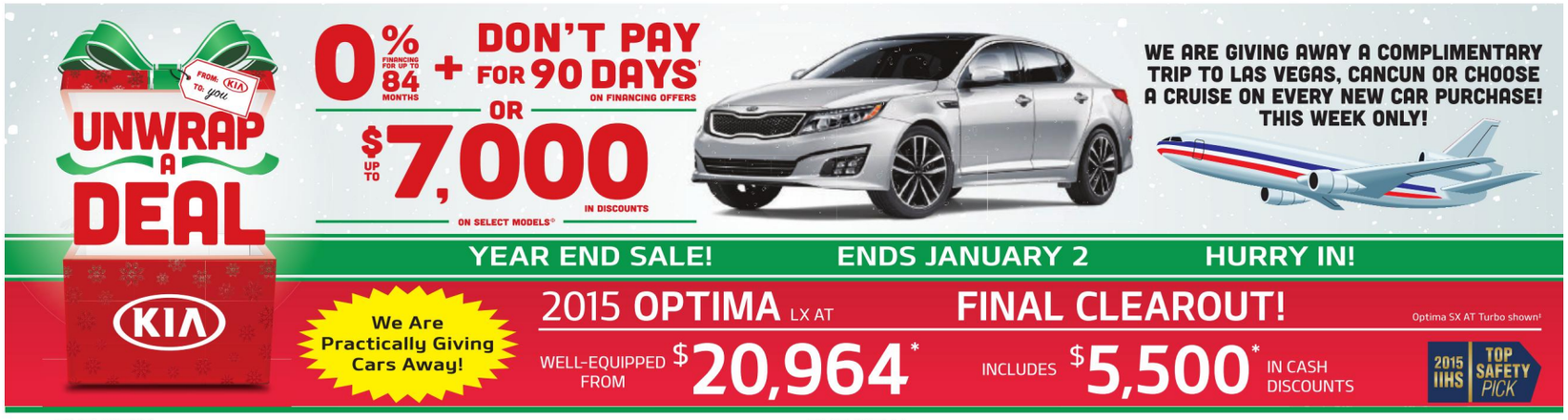
• 1/2 cup (125 mL) Kewpie mayonnaise
• 1/2 cup (125 mL) panko crumbs or dried bread crumbs
• 12 fresh oysters, shucked and still in its half shell
• 3 Tbsp (45 mL) salmon caviar

Baked oysters with Kewpie mayo is an easy and slightly decadent party snack to make for you and your family or friends on Dec. 31. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Directions:

1. In a small bowl, mix together Kewpie mayo and bread crumbs. Set aside.
2. Arrange oysters on a small baking sheet lined with aluminum foil. If oysters aren't balancing, crumple a bit of foil around the oyster shell for support.
3. Using a spoon, spread a small dollop of mayonnaise mixture on top of each oyster, about 1 Tbsp. Bake at 450F (230 C) for 8 to 10 minutes, or until mayonnaise mixture starts to brown and crisp up.
4. Transfer oysters to serving plate. Garnish each oyster with 4 to 5 salmon roe. Serve immediately.

Makes 4 servings.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE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INCLUDES $5,500* IN CASH DISCOUNTS
2015 IIHS TOP SAFETY PICK
THE NEW 2016 FORTE SEDAN LX MT
5-Star Safety Ratings
More Stars. Safer Cars.
Forte SX AT shown‡
THAT'S LIKE PAYING ONLY $34Ω WEEKLY
LEASE FROM $148Ω MONTHLY
$750 DOWN AT 0% APR FOR 60 MONTHS^
INCLUDES $1,300 DISCOUNT^
THE NEW 2016 SOUL LX MT
Soul SX Luxury shown‡
THAT'S LIKE PAYING ONLY $45Ω WEEKLY
LEASE FROM $194Ω MONTHLY
$1,000 DOWN AT 0.9% APR FOR 36 MONTHS^
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Offer(s) available on select new 2015/2016 models through participating dealers to qualified retail customers who take delivery from December 1, 2015 to January 4, 2016. Dealers may sell or lease for less. Some conditions apply. See dealer for complete details. Vehicles shown may include optional accessories and upgrades available at extra cost. All offers are subject to change without notice. All pricing and payments include delivery and destination fees up to $1,715, $1-OMVIC fee, $20 tire fee, and $300 A/C charge (where applicable). Excludes other taxes, licensing, PPSA, registration, insurance, variable dealer administration fees, fuel-fill charges up to $100, and down payment (if applicable and unless otherwise specified). Other lease and financing options also available. *0% financing for up to 84 months or up to $7,000 discount available on other select 2015 models. Discount is deducted from the negotiated purchase/lease price before taxes. Maximum $7,000 discount ($6,000 cash discounts and $1,000 ECO-Credit) is offered on 2015 Optima Hybrid LX (OP744F) only. $1,000 ECO-Credit is offered on all 2016 Optima Hybrid models. Certain conditions apply. See your dealer for complete details. **Representative Financing Example:** Financing offer available on approved credit (OAC), on a new 2016 Rio LX MT (RO54JG) with a selling price of $15,864 is based on monthly payments of $177 for 84 months at 0% with a $0 down payment and first monthly payment due at finance inception. Offer also includes $1,000 discount (loan credit). Other taxes, registration, insurance and licensing fees are excluded. ^"Don't Pay For 90 Days" on all models (90-day payment deferral) applies to purchase financing offers on all new 2015/2016 models on approved credit. No interest will accrue during the first 60 days of the finance contract. After this period, interest starts to accrue and the purchaser will repay the principal interest monthly over the term of the contract. Offer ends January 4, 2016. ***Cash Purchase Price** for the new 2015 Optima LX AT (OP742F)/2015 Optima Hybrid LX (OP744F) is $20,964/$24,764 and includes a cash discount of $5,500/$7,000 including $6,000 cash discounts and $1,000 ECO-Credit. Dealer may sell for less. Other taxes, registration, insurance and licensing fees are excluded. Cash discounts vary by model and trim and are deducted from the negotiated selling price before taxes. **Representative Leasing Example:** Lease offer available on approved credit (OAC), on the 2016 Forte Sedan LX MT (FO54FJ)/2016 Soul LX MT (SO55FJ) with a selling price of $17,564/$18,944 is based on monthly payments of $148/$194 for 60/36 months at 0%/0.9%, with $0 security deposit, $1,300/$0 discounts (lease credit), $750/$1,000 down payment and first monthly payment due at lease inception. Total lease obligation $8,815/$6,999 with the option to purchase at the end of the term for $6,666/$10,346. Lease has $0.000 km/yr allowance (other packages available and $0.12/km for excess kilometres). ΩOpen to Canadian residents who have reached the age of majority in their province or territory of residence who take a test drive at a Canadian Kia dealership between November 1, 2015 and January 4, 2016. 10 weekly prizes of a $1,000 travel/$1000 voucher available. Plus one $100 travel voucher per eligible test drive. Limit of one entry/test drive voucher per person. No purchase necessary. Skill testing question required. Some conditions apply. Go to kia.ca for complete details. §Lease payments must be made on a monthly or bi-weekly basis but cannot be made on a weekly basis. Weekly lease payments are for advertising purposes only. †Model shown Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price for 2016 Forte SX AT (FO74RG)/2016 Soul SX Luxury (SO75RG)/2015 Optima SX AT Turbo (OP748F) is $26,695/$27,495/$34,895. The 2015 Optima was awarded the 2015 Top Safety Pick by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) for model year 2015. U.S. models tested. Visit www.iihs.org for full details. The Kia Soul received the lowest number of problems per 100 vehicles among compact multi-purpose vehicles in the proprietary J.D. Power 2015 U.S. Initial Quality Study®. Study based on responses from 84,367 U.S. new-vehicle owners, measuring 244 models and measures opinions after 90 days of ownership. Proprietary study results are based on experiences and perceptions of U.S. owners surveyed from February to May 2015. Your experiences may vary. Visit jdpower.com. Government 5-Star Safety Ratings are part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) New Car Assessment Program (www.SaferCar.gov). Information in this advertisement is believed to be accurate at the time of printing. For more information on our 5-year warranty coverage, visit kia.ca or call us at 1-877-542-2886. Kia is a trademark of Kia Motors Corporation. Ask Dealer for Details. Customers pay Tax on Trips.

More grocery sticker shock on the way

If a trip to the grocery store seems expensive now, just wait till 2016. Executives from grocery chains have warned there's no immediate relief in sight from increased food costs and a sinking loonie that have led to higher prices. Here's a rundown of what researchers suggest consumers will have to deal with in the year ahead **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

BY THE NUMBERS

$345

Annual increase in cost of food

The University of Guelph's Food Institute estimates the average Canadian household spent an additional $325 on food this year. On top of that, consumers should expect an additional annual increase of about $345 in 2016.

↑4-4.5%

Imported veggies and fruit

Since 81 per cent of all vegetables and fruit consumed in Canada are imported, they are highly vulnerable to currency fluctuations. They are pegged to increase in price by four to 4.5 per cent in the new year. "It means that essentially families will have to spend more on these two items without many options, unfortunately," says Sylvain Charlebois, lead author of the university's sixth annual Food Price Report.

↑2-4.5%

Meat, fish, dairy, eggs and grains

Meat prices, which rose five per cent this past year, are expected to increase up to another 4.5 per cent in 2016; fish and seafood could rise by up to three per cent; and dairy, eggs and grains could see a two per cent increase.

THE RISE OF AFFORDABLE PULSES

Given that the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization has declared 2016 the International Year of the Pulses — which is important to Canada as one of the world's largest growers of pulses (lentils, chickpeas, beans, dry peas) — Charlebois expects there to be more emphasis on cheaper protein alternatives.

Getty Stewart, a home economist in Winnipeg, suggests that consumers feeling pinched by increased prices explore more recipes with affordable pulses.

"There's all kinds of reasons why we should be using and enjoying our pulses more. They're affordable, they're nutritious, they have a great source of protein, they have a low environmental footprint," Stewart said.

$1,500

Cost of food waste per year

Consumers can also make an effort to reduce food waste, which is estimated to be far more costly than food inflation.

A report last year by Provision Coalition, an advocacy group for the food and beverage industry, used Statistics Canada data and other research to estimate that the average household wastes about $1,500 worth of food a year.

"We waste ... food because we don't use it and it gets funky in the fridge, or we forget that we have something in the fridge, or we don't use our leftovers, or we throw something out because it reaches the best-before date," said Stewart.

"I think becoming more savvy about our food and not wasting it is important as well, so ... we make good use of those grocery dollars."

COPING WITH HIGHER FOOD PRICES

Tips to help keep food costs down

- Rather than buying strawberries in winter when the price is higher and quality is lower, stick to seasonal pears, oranges, grapefruits and pomegranates.
- Frozen and canned produce can be great alternatives when a particular fruit or vegetable spikes in price.
- Experiment with new recipes using root vegetables like squash, parsnips, carrots, beets and sweet potatoes.
- Choose less expensive cuts of meat that can be stewed, marinated, braised or prepared in the slow cooker.
- Cut down on fancy coffee, pop, candy, cookies and salty snacks and spend that money on more healthy calories.

IN THE KITCHEN

Food trends 2016: Veggie mains, sweet-heat combos, bone broth

Roasted carrots with honey, garlic, thyme and coriander.
THE CANADIAN PRESS HANDOUT

Trend watchers, chefs and foodies alike stand united on vegetables — once lowly or overlooked as a side, they're being elevated to a starring role.

Christine Couvelier says 2015 has been an amazing year for vegetables and the root-to-leaf movement will continue in 2016 with more creative preparations, from grilling and smoking to roasting and charring.

"We thought seeing whole roasted cauliflowers was a wow on some menus, but that's just the tip of the iceberg," says the Victoria-based Couvelier, whose Culinary Concierge company helps clients around North America keep ahead of market trends.

"I think it's a continuation on understanding fresh and local and being very innovative and creative in the kitchen," she says.

"I think a lot of it also is consumers' understanding the health benefits around that style of eating too. We're not saying not to have meat, but all in proportion and looking to vegetables to fill a great deal of the plate."

Couvelier also sees hummus emerging as the new salsa, juice bars as the new coffee shops, and fried chicken being the new pork belly. Fried chicken, often paired with waffles, can feature different seasonings and be made spicy, sweet, brined or crusted.

High in protein and fibre and low in fat, hummus can be an appetizer, dip, spread or part of a main course.

"It's recognizable in its original form and accepted, so now people are branching out and they're eager to try something different," says Couvelier, who's had black bean hummus, edamame hummus with roasted red peppers, spicy yellow lentil hummus and, her favourite, a zesty Sriracha carrot hummus.

Other trends that Couvelier predicts will grow next year:

- More of the complex flavour combination of sweet and heat. Consider chilies and honey, Sriracha and maple syrup drizzled over roasted vegetables, honey and wasabi on chicken, jalapeno-infused honey and Sriracha peach jam, Couvelier suggests.
- New Yorkers have been lining up to buy paper cups of flavourful bone broth from chef Marco Canora, who opened a takeout window at his restaurant Hearth. Because the bones are roasted and cooked longer than with stock, they release protein, minerals and nutrients. "You can put them in soups or stews. You can just drink them. Chefs are putting them on their menus and they can add things to them like coconut milk or beet juice or ginger juice. And just a couple of months ago, bone broth started showing up in the stock section of grocery stores," Couvelier says.

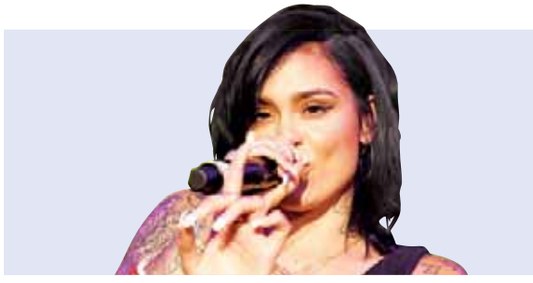
THE CANADIAN PRESS

5 SINGERS WHO WILL BE SWEET IN '16

The path to pop stardom is littered with the remains of fallen boy banders. No disrespect, Zayn — we still believe in you! — but these five artists could also break big in 2016. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

1 Daniela Andrade

Six years ago, the Edmonton-raised Honduran-Canadian singer started posting acoustic guitar covers of songs such as Coldplay's The Scientist and the Beatles' All My Loving in a hoodie and glasses. Now living in Toronto, the 23-year-old has mostly lost the glasses, but her softly dazzling voice on covers such as Radiohead's Creep (8.6 million views) and Gnarls Barkley's Crazy (6.1 million views) hasn't changed. Andrade plans to release Shore, an EP featuring four original songs accompanied by four original music videos, in early 2016.



2 Kehlani

The 20-year-old R&B singer got her start on America's Got Talent, but don't hold that against her. The reality show did nothing to boost her career and she was working at Hot Topic before self-releasing her mixtape You Should Be Here. It was so well received that she was scooped up by Atlantic Records shortly thereafter and it went on to score a Grammy nom for Best Urban Contemporary Album. Earlier this month, she dropped the kiss-off track Did I, featuring the unlikely hip-hop sample of Feist's 2007 song Intuition.

3 Erik Hassle

The Swedish singer-songwriter has been known in his Nordic homeland since 2008, but his snap-along single No Words became an official #SwiftSquad anthem when Taylor Swift chose it as the kickoff to a Songs That Will Make Your Life More Awesome playlist. Paired with the equally upbeat single Smaller, Hassle's upcoming album is shaping up to be the kind of perfectly produced pop that the Swedes excel at.

4 Kiki Rowe

The self-titled debut mini-album from 2014 had a slow-burn success for the 19-year-old from Mississauga. The ambient EDM track Trust Issues, produced by DJ Mustard, skipped past 100,000 plays on Soundcloud earlier this month and her restrained vocals on Norwegian DJ Kygo's tropical-house remix Got Me Thinkin' show that diva deliveries have definitely left the dance floor.

5 Tory Lanez

Though Lanez was homeless in Toronto when he was just 14, the 23-year-old rapper is now riding high off the strength of his smooth R&B bedroom ballad Say It. Like Drake, Lanez sings as well as he spits, with witty verses such as "women love me like I'm on the Ellen show" (B.L.O.W.). After a long underground reign that has spanned 13 mixtapes and an EP, Lanez's debut album is finally slated for 2016.

JOHANNA SCHNELLER
WHAT I'M WATCHING

Namaste, Bitches skewers yoga scene in L.A.

THE SHOW: Namaste, Bitches: Season 1, Episode 4 (YouTube)
THE MOMENT: The Flyer

Yoga instructor Sabine (Summer Chastant, who created this web series) is not feeling serene. She recently moved to Los Angeles, and is shocked by how cutthroat the yoga culture is. Now she's staring in disbelief at a flyer stapled to a pole: It's the cute guy who took her most recent class (they made out afterward).

It turns out he's a spy from a rival studio. Sabine pulls down the flyer and rips it in half. "Way to show initiative!" exclaims someone behind her — her boss, a pseudo-guru with a massive ego. "When I feel my tapas rising I like to chant along with my harmonium," the boss chirps. "But destroying enemy materials is also a fine choice."

There's nothing more hypocritical than competitive yoga, and no place riper for a sendup of that than L.A. These six five-minute webisodes are a little rough, but Chastant smartly recognizes an opportunity for parody in a world where yogis are judged by the size of their Instagram following; where people say, "Gratitude" instead of thank you; and frenemies give advice in hashtags (as in, "Sabine, you have to learn to be #NoF—sGiven")

Note: So ripe is this world for parody that there's a second amateur web series called Namaste Bitches (no comma), about churlish women who form a chanting circle. They claim they want to make the world a kinder place, but really they just want to make themselves feel less terrible.

Watching both series takes less time than one yoga class.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

Namaste, Bitches looks at the hypocritical world of hyper-competitive yoga. CONTRIBUTED

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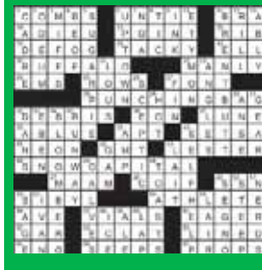

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3	4	7	5	2	9	6	1	8
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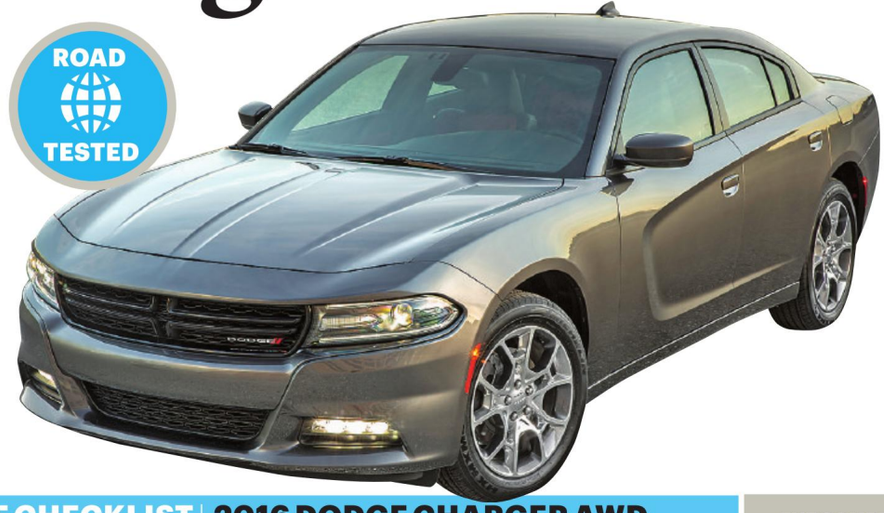
Charger more than just muscle



THE CHECKLIST | 2016 DODGE CHARGER AWD

THE BASICS

Type. Four-door, five-passenger, AWD full-size sedan
Power. 292-hp 3.6-litre V6, 300-hp 3.6-litre V6, 370-hp 5.7-litre V8, 485-hp 6.4-litre V8
Transmission. 8-speed automatic
Price. Base $36,495 (plus destination)

COOL FEATURES

- Electronic gear selector feels and looks like "old school" shifter with mechanical linkages
- Available forward collision warning with active braking, and cruise with automatic full stop
- "Blacktop" appearance group delivers naughty "blacked-out" exterior vibe

MIKE GOETZ/FOR METRO; MAIN: COURTESY CHRYSLER

POINTS

- Engineering twin to the Chrysler 300; both nameplates built in Bramalea
- AWD available on SE and SXT trim lines
- Selectable Sport Mode sportifies steering, shifting and throttle, and, on AWD models, provides rear-based torque for dynamic handling

MARKET POSITION

- Heralded by Dodge as "world's only four-door muscle car"
- Wide trim range, from rental-car basic to snarly 485-hp SRT 392 model
- Only full-size, rear-drive sedan available from a "non-luxury" brand

THE COMPETITION

Buick LaCrosse AWD
Base price: $42,175

Hyundai Genesis AWD
Base price: $43,000

Ford Taurus AWD
Base price: $35,499

REVIEW

AWD and lots of tech allow sedan to succeed in multiple roles

Mike Goetz
For Metro Canada

Dodge has always infused its biggest sedan, Charger, with varying degrees of muscle car goodness. In fact, Dodge calls it "the world's only four-door muscle car."

But the genius of Charger is that with its many iterations and trim lines, you can basically order as much muscle — visual and actual —as you want, need, or can afford.

Our Charger test victim was pretty much "Goldilocks" for me: not too hot, nor too cold with the muscle car treatment. SXT trim with Rallye package means some blacked-out exterior bits, rear spoiler, and more horsepower and torque totals (300 and 265, respectively) from the standard 3.6-litre V6, due to a unique cold-air induction system, sport-tuned exhaust, and a bit of engine computer tinkering.

But this tester also has all-wheel-drive, making this rear-wheel-drive car a better match for our Canadian winters. The unique AWD system features an active transfer case, which automatically disconnects and connects the front axle. In this way, you're mostly in rear-wheel drive, to partake of the lively sport feel that rear-wheel drive provides, while saving fuel at the same time. The vehicle has an EnerGuide rating of 10.9 L/100 km for combined highway and city driving — quite acceptable for such a large sedan with 300 hp and AWD.

Part of the efficiency is achieved by Chrysler's excellent 8-speed automatic. In top gear on the highway, the big V6 barely revs (about 1,500 rpm at 100 km/h). At all times the V6 feels powerful and refined.

This chassis has always been excellent. The Charger provides a comfortable ride over rough pavement, and turns confidently. AWD versions ride a bit higher. When I drove by small crossovers, I noticed I sat at least as high as their drivers.

The interior cabin is well finished, though the top of the dash is a wide prairie of plastic. Personally, I think Chrysler's touchscreen infotainment system is one of the industry's best: nice and bright; easy to use; integrated nicely into the front panel.

The rear seating area is not quiet as roomy as you'd think for the size of the car, but still good. The windows are kind of small in the back too, which also hinders the driver's visibility.

The large trunk swallowed two large hockey bags with ease.

Fewer people are buying big sedans these days, as crossovers are able to give you more room for a comparable (or even a smaller) footprint, in addition to AWD, a tailgate giving access to a big storage area, a high driver's view of the road, et cetera, et cetera. But the AWD Charger is an interesting alternative for some, as it meets you partway to the crossover world, while delivering that lovely rear-drive experience and some muscle car vibe.

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Starting From Price for 2016 Jeep Cherokee Trailhawk shown: $35,540.§

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Starting From Price for 2016 Jeep Patriot High Altitude shown: $25,230.§

Starting From Price for 2015 Jeep Grand Cherokee Overland shown: $58,690§

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Jeep RAM

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GM's look at how the wind blows

DRIVING FORCE

Facility adds reduced-scale wind tunnel to match test cars

Jil McIntosh
For Metro Canada

When it comes to saving fuel, a car's engine is only part of the puzzle. Aerodynamic styling plays a huge role, and so engineers use wind tunnels to assess models as they're being developed.

It's common to use full-size vehicle models, made of malleable clay for quick design tweaks, but some automakers also use scaled-down versions. General Motors recently added a wind tunnel that's equally scaled down to match these vehicle models, sized at 40 per cent of a full-size wind test facility.

The company previously tested these smaller clay models alongside regular ones in its full-size wind tunnel, but needed extra capacity. Building a smaller tunnel specifically for these models increased overall testing capability, but at far less cost than adding a second full-size tunnel.

"It took about 18 months to build and we're doing readiness testing," says Jeff Bordner, engineering group manager for the GM aerodynamics lab in Warren, Mich. "Production testing should begin in January."

How it's done

The vehicles start with either wood or metal frames. These are covered with foam and topped with a layer of clay. During testing, clay can be added or shaved off to tweak the vehicle's design, and it's much quicker and easier to do this on a smaller-sized vehicle. Adding half a kilogram of clay to a 40 per cent model is the equivalent of slathering more than seven kilograms onto a full-size one.

Top: Engineer Nina Tortosa demonstrates aerodynamics on a small-scale model. At left: A 40 per cent scale model with the scaled-down wind tunnel. JIL MCINTOSH/FOR METRO

The model faces the wind blowing out of the tunnel as its wheels turn on moving belts in the floor, simulating driving on a road. Cameras and sensors record the test, feeding information to banks of computers in an adjacent laboratory. Engineers use a device that creates smoke in front of or alongside the car, so they can see how the wind moves over the model's shape and where it meets resistance or creates turbulence.

It's similar to when you hold your hand out the window of a moving car: You feel resistance when your hand is straight up, versus holding it flat with your fingers forward. Even a minor change to a mirror or fascia can make a considerable difference in how the air flows around the design.

"We're measuring the force the wind is putting on the vehicle," Bordner says. "You want to reduce the drag force to make it more aerodynamic, so we get the best shape for the vehicle we're trying to develop."

EFFICIENCY

- Aerodynamic improvements are the most cost-effective method for improving fuel efficiency, versus powertrain technologies or pricey lightweight materials.
- The clay models have moving suspensions, simulated engines and cooling systems, full underbodies, and open grilles, since these all affect wind resistance.
- The scaled-down models weigh about 200 kilograms and are moved with a small crane.

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metro SPORTS

Penguins goalie Marc-Andre Fleury returned to practice Tuesday for the first time since suffering a concussion on Dec. 14

A lesson in locking in

WORLD JUNIORS

Canada able to 'flip the switch' after spotting Swiss two goals

Canada's world junior team has learned a valuable lesson about respecting its opponent.

Matt Barzal scored the shootout winner as Canada edged Switzerland 3-2 at Helsinki Ice Hall on Tuesday to avoid a big Group A preliminary-round upset at the world junior hockey championship.

The plucky Swiss side gave the defending champions all they could handle, jumping out to a 2-0 lead in the first period. Dylan Strome scored late in the opening frame for Canada, and Joe Hicketts tied the game in the second period.

Brayden Point had the other shootout goal while both Swiss shooters were stopped by goalie Mackenzie Blackwood, who was making his world junior debut.

Barzal and his teammates plan to use the game as a learning experience.

"I think it could be good for us just knowing that we can't take anyone lightly coming out of the gates," Barzal said. "Every game's going to be a hard-fought game, and we've got to prepare the same way."

Many Canadian players gave credit to Hicketts for the turnaround. The defenceman gave a speech in the locker room during the first intermission.

"It was about getting back to work," said Hicketts. "Maybe we underestimated them a little bit, maybe the respect factor wasn't there, and maybe it was just a lack of preparation.

"We knew that when we came out for the second period it was going to have to be a 180, to flip the switch, to start playing our brand of hockey."

Damian Riat and Dario Meyer scored for Switzerland (0-3), while Joren van Pottelberghe stopped 32 shots.

Blackwood, who made 23 saves, sat out Canada's first two games as he completed an eight-game suspension from the Ontario Hockey League. Netminder Mason McDonald started the first two games of the tournament with Samuel Montembeault serving as the backup.

Switzerland has relied on a physical, punishing brand of hockey to make up for its relative lack of skill compared to countries like Canada and Sweden. That led to suspensions for three Swiss players after an 8-2 loss to Sweden on Saturday.

They used a similar strategy against Canada on Tuesday. The Canadians (2-1), who lost 4-2 to the United States on Saturday and routed Denmark 6-1 Monday, admitted to not doing their homework.

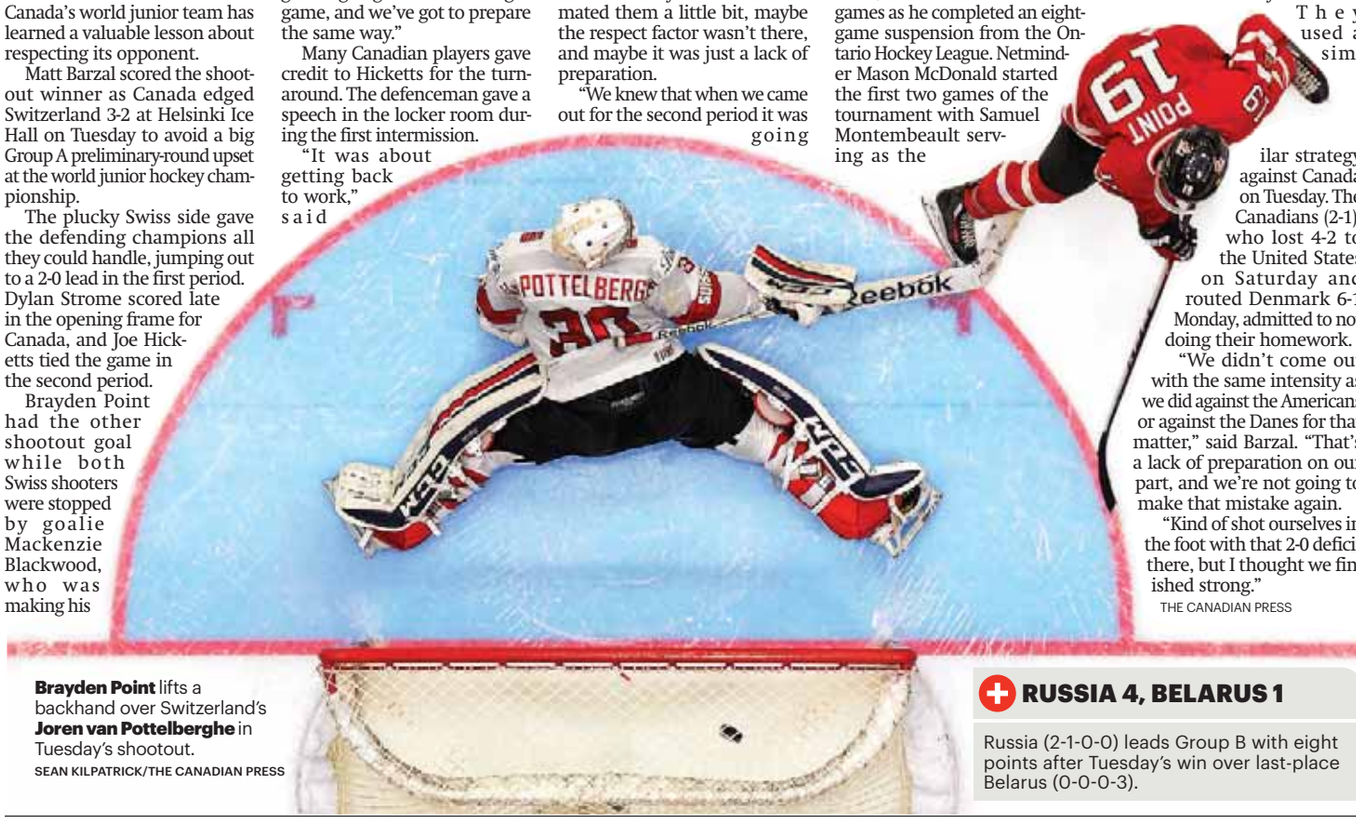
"We didn't come out with the same intensity as we did against the Americans or against the Danes for that matter," said Barzal. "That's a lack of preparation on our part, and we're not going to make that mistake again.

"Kind of shot ourselves in the foot with that 2-0 deficit there, but I thought we finished strong."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TUESDAY In Helsinki

3	2
CANADA	SWITZERLAND



Brayden Point lifts a backhand over Switzerland's **Joren van Pottelberghe** in Tuesday's shootout.
SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

RUSSIA 4, BELARUS 1

Russia (2-1-0-0) leads Group B with eight points after Tuesday's win over last-place Belarus (0-0-0-3).

IN BRIEF

Eagles cut Kelly loose

The Philadelphia Eagles fired Chip Kelly with one game left in his third season, dumping the coach after missing the playoffs in consecutive years.

Kelly was released Tuesday night just before the end of a disappointing season that began with Super Bowl expectations. The Eagles are 6-9 after going 10-6 in each of Kelly's first two seasons. They were eliminated from playoff contention after losing to Washington at home on Saturday night.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Herdman should have his 'keeper for Rio qualifiers

Canadian goalkeeper Erin McLeod has a bone bruise but should be ready for the women's Olympic soccer qualifying tournament in Texas in February.

McLeod had to leave the Dec. 20 final of an international tournament in Brazil after falling awkwardly on her right leg in a collision with Brazilian star Marta.

Erin McLeod
GETTY IMAGES

Canadian coach John Herdman said Tuesday that McLeod is listed as week-to-week but is scheduled to be ready for the CONCACAF qualifying tournament in Houston.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

Leafs miles behind the Isles

Jonathan Bernier's troubles in net continued on Tuesday as the New York Islanders downed the Toronto Maple Leafs 6-3 to split a home-and-home set.

Bernier was beaten by the second shot of the game and struggled the rest of the night — giving up six goals on just 15 shots through the two periods of play before James Reimer took over to start the third.

Brock Nelson, John Tavares, Frans Nielsen, Nikolay Kulemin, Matt Martin and Anders Lee scored for the Islanders (20-12-5), while Thomas Greiss turned aside 30 of 33 shots for the win.

Brad Boyes, Pierre-Alexandre Parenteau and Shawn Matthias had goals for the Maple Leafs (13-15-7), who beat New York 3-1 on Sunday at Barclays Center.

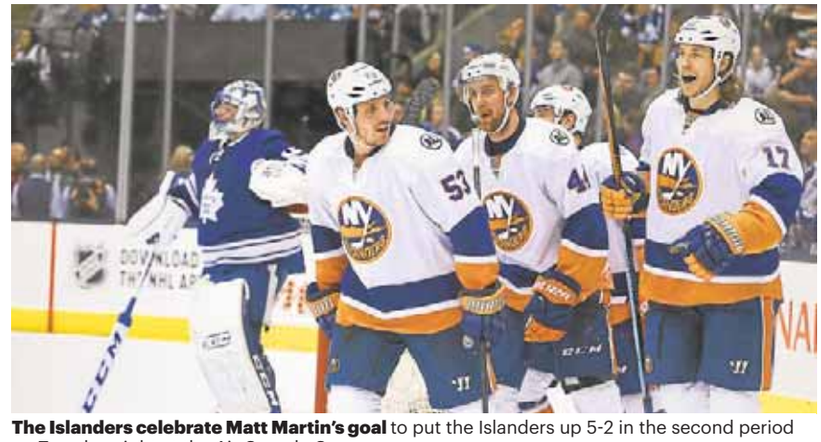
Reimer, who was making his first appearance in net since missing seven games with an injury, made six saves in relief.

The Leafs outshot the Islanders 12-7 in the opening 20 minutes but allowed three first-period goals for the first time all season.

Bernier was given a subtle cheer from the crowd when he stopped the York's 13th shot of the game but he was beaten on the 14th by Martin with under two minutes to play in the second. Making matters worse for the struggling netminder, Lee also beat Bernier with his Isles' very next shot to make it 6-2 with 39 seconds to play in the period. THE CANADIAN PRESS

TUESDAY at ACC

6	3
ISLANDERS	LEAFS



The Islanders celebrate Matt Martin's goal to put the Islanders up 5-2 in the second period on Tuesday night at the Air Canada Centre. RICK MADONIK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

PREMIER LEAGUE

Leicester falls from top spot with draw

Leicester relinquished first place in the English Premier League heading into 2016 after drawing 0-0 with Manchester City in an entertaining stalemate on Tuesday.

Arsenal leads Leicester — the surprise team of the season — on goal difference, with third-place City three points behind after half of the league campaign.

Raheem Sterling was a danger in the first half for City at King Power Stadium, forcing Leicester goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel into three saves, while striker Jamie Vardy wasted the home side's best chance by blazing over when clear on goal.

City finally managed to keep a clean sheet without injured captain Vincent Kompany (calf) — who was ruled out for up to four weeks by manager Manuel Pellegrini after the game — but hasn't won away in its last six attempts.

At King Power Stadium

LEICESTER	MAN CITY
0	0

"I don't think in December that you're going to win the title," Pellegrini said. "At the end of January and the first week of February, maybe we can see more who are finally the teams which will be involved in the fight."

After a loss at Liverpool on Saturday, Leicester's title credentials were questioned by some, especially as it was battling relegation all of last season. But Claudio Ranieri's side silenced their doubters with another superb performance, holding its own against many pundits' favourite for the championship. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DeMar DeRozan passes the ball to Kyle Lowry during the Raptors' season opener against the Pacers. VAUGHN RIDLEY/GETTY IMAGES

Raptors take good with bad on offence

NBA

Dinos among worst in assists but 4th overall and tops in East

There are two undeniable facts about the Toronto Raptors offence, as incongruent as they seem to be.

The bad? The Raptors don't do a lot of passing, at least not making passes that lead to baskets, and in this era where swift and efficient ball movement is a key to beating athletic defence, that's a troubling trait.

They are second-last in the NBA in assists, averaging just 14.6 per game, a shoddy mark by the standards of the game.

The good? By many of the advanced metrics so in vogue these days, the Raptors have one of the most efficient and effective offences in the game, right up there with the Golden State Warriors, Oklahoma City Thunder and San Antonio Spurs.

They ranked fourth in the NBA according to the league stats, averaging 104 points per 100 possessions, the best in the Eastern Conference going into Wednesday night play.

The Raptors also don't play particularly fast — they rank in the bottom third of the league in pace — and they don't waste a lot of time making any extra passes; how can they be bad and good at the same time?

22.6

The number of points DeRozan averages per game, which is the team high.

There are no easy answers so they seem content to just go with the flow.

"We've tried, we've got offence in place to promote ball movement but our DNA is catch and put the ball on the floor," coach Dwane Casey said this week. "Believe me, we've tried to change it.

"We're in the lower rung in assists but we're four in offensive efficiency or somewhere in the top five. So there's a give and take with that."

To be sure, Toronto's two most effective scorers — DeMar DeRozan and Kyle Lowry — are self-creators offensively, DeRozan is at times lethal in the mid-post and getting mid-range jump shots, and Lowry driving to get some shot for himself is a staple of the team's attack.

They both average more than 20 points a game — no one else on the roster averages even 13 per night — and they combine for more than 33 shots of the 81 the Raptors take on average.

Toronto probably doesn't have to change its offence based on its overall efficiency but Casey strives for improvement each day. "We've had spots but we're still reaching trying to have better ball movement, body movement and balance," he said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

NFL

Osweiler keeps his cool in spotlight

Nothing seems to bother Brock Osweiler.

Not the incessant Peyton Manning news or his leaky O-line, dropped passes or missed field goals. Not a separated left shoulder, a bum left elbow or an infected left eye.

Not even two-touchdown deficits.

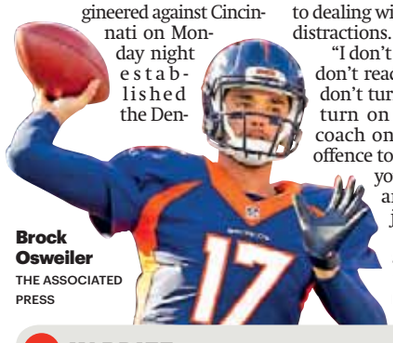
The comeback Osweiler engineered against Cincinnati on Monday night established the Denver Broncos as the only team in NFL history ever to overcome 14-point deficits in one season against three playoff-bound teams. Two of those came on his watch.

The Broncos (11-4) clinched a playoff spot Monday when he drove Denver to the go-ahead field goal in overtime.

Osweiler has a simple solution to dealing with all the would-be distractions.

"I don't hear it," he said. "I don't read the newspaper. I don't turn on ESPN. I don't turn on NFL Network. A coach once told me — no offence to anybody — 'Close your ears to all of that and focus on your job.'"

Osweiler is 4-2 as Denver's starter. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Brock Osweiler THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

St. Louis sends $1-billion stadium plan to NFL

A task force empanelled by Missouri's governor made its formal financing pitch Tuesday to the National Football League for a billion-dollar stadium along the Mississippi River, hoping to keep the St. Louis Rams from bolting for suburban Los Angeles or attract a new team if they do. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Suns say Bledsoe out for season after knee surgery

The Phoenix Suns say leading scorer Eric Bledsoe will not return this season after undergoing surgery Tuesday to repair a torn meniscus in his left knee.

The 26-year-old point guard, who is averaging 20.4 points and 6.1 assists per game, was injured in the team's home loss to Philadelphia on Saturday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AWARDS

Blue Jays named CP's team of the year

A trade deadline to remember. A second-half surge to the playoffs. A bat flip for the ages.

The Toronto Blue Jays put baseball back on the map in the playoff-starved city this year and the rest of the country took notice. Canada's lone Major League Baseball team, which won the East Division title and came within two wins of the World Series, was voted the landslide winner of The Canadian Press team of the year award.

> **"It seemed like everybody came together and fans that weren't fans became fans."** Alex Anthopoulos

"There's so many adjectives that come to mind, but great, exciting, proud," former general manager Alex Anthopoulos said of the 2015 team. "I think it just meant a lot for Canada and the city obviously, but more Canada than anything else."

The Blue Jays picked up 40 votes (71 per cent) in an online survey of broadcasters and editors from media outlets across the country. The Canadian world junior hockey team that won gold last January was a distant second with six votes (11 per cent).

"It seems funny, on some levels, to elect a team that didn't even get to its league final," said Jonathan McDonald, sports editor of The Province in Vancouver. "But for the first time in a long, long time, the Blue Jays had a good chunk of Canada captivated by baseball again. And I mean captivated. People were talking about the Jays seven days a week for about three months. That's an accomplishment in itself." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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RECIPE Chicken and Rice Soup

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

We lovingly refer to this kind of meal as a half-homemade dinner. Use holiday leftovers or pick up a rotisserie chicken on the way home and whip up a pot of this delicious, nourishing soup.

Ready in
Prep time: 20 minutes
Serves 6

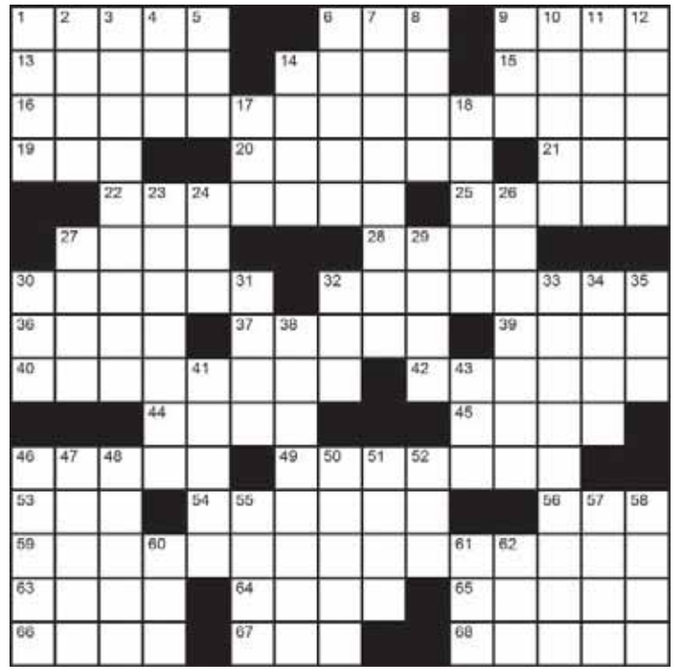
Ingredients
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 4 carrots, peeled and diced
- 4 celery, trimmed and diced
- 1 Tbsp fresh thyme
- 6 cups low-sodium chicken stock
- 3 cups leftover or rotisserie chicken, shredded
- 1 1/2 cups frozen corn (4 cobs with the corn sliced off)
- 1/2 cup fresh dill, chopped
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 2 cups cooked rice
- Salt and pepper

Directions
1. Place oil in a large pot and bring to medium heat. Add onions, carrots and celery and sauté for three minutes, until the vegetables start to soften. Add the thyme and stir.
2. Pour the stock into the pot. Now add the chicken, corn, dill, lemon juice and cooked rice. Taste and add salt and pepper to taste.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Jean de Brunhoff's elephant
6. Dove's sound
9. Dismounted
13. 'Rice-_-_, The San Francisco Treat!'
14. Bryn _ (Pennsylvania college)
15. Ski for gold
16. Component of a winter weather report: 3 wds.
19. Vegas opener
20. Counterbalance
21. Not outs
22. Buy with real money: 2 wds.
25. Keyed up
27. King
28. Use red pen
30. "Hmmm... I _ _ recall that..."
32. Item for cooking on the stove
36. "_ McBeal"
37. Irish writer Oscar
39. _ Against The Machine (Hard rock band)
40. California city
42. Day-to-evening time
44. Ms. Ephron
45. Pen brand, Paper _
46. Purposeful saying
49. Marc _, painter of I and the Village (1911, oil on canvas)
53. Ruckus
54. Cough drops from Switzerland
56. "Could _ _ Your Girl" by Jann Arden
59. Motto on Ontario licence plates: 3 wds.
63. Hide
64. Work units
65. Hockey rink locale
66. Gaelic
67. Suffix with 'Stock'
68. Cozy retreats in trees

DOWN
1. Wail
2. Soprano's showstopper
3. Curling tournaments
4. Bachman _ Cummings
5. Mr. Ocasek
6. The baby cow's
7. Ski resort in the Eastern Townships in Quebec since 1965: 2 wds.
8. Golden _ (Ornamental pond fish)
9. Electrical discharge
10. Official-sounding language
11. Symbols
12. Succinct
14. Do, Re, _, _...
17. Ad _ committee
18. House area
23. Military bug?: 2 wds.
24. However
26. Jim Carrey movie, "_ Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" (2004)
27. Ms. Ward of "Sisters"
29. Club member fees
30. Maple syrup source
31. Indebted person
32. Extremist org. in 1974 headlines
33. Those who have been reincarnated have had them: 2 wds.
34. James _ (Pulitzer-winning writer)
35. Goalie's area
38. Agreeing/of one mind: 2 wds.
41. Jim Morrison's band, with The
43. Ms. Thurman
46. "Call Me _" by Carly Rae Jepsen
47. Glade target
48. Roadie's gigs
50. Dave _, Canadian sports journalist
51. Actress Ms. Larter's
52. "Taxi" fuel
55. Virginia willow
57. Twisted
58. Big times
60. Three-lettered bread
61. Tin
62. Amer. state

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
Things have been going so well you might be wondering what the catch is. Don't worry, it's not some kind of cosmic trick to lull you into a false sense of security. You are being rewarded for your hard work.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
You need to forgive yourself for your mistakes. There is no point wishing you could go back and change what you did, so you might as well move on. What's done is done.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You will get more done if you don't try too hard today. Also, you might want to take yourself a little less seriously. Forget about work — go out with your friends.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You may not feel much like pushing yourself today and that's fine. If anyone has earned a break it's you. So get yourself a mug of something hot, sit back and watch the world go by.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
You will get what you want today without really trying. With Venus moving into your fellow Fire sign of Sagittarius you exude an aura of confidence that will attract all sorts of people to you. Just be yourself.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Agree with what others tell you, no matter how stupid some of it may sound. Everything will work out and in the greater scheme of things there is no need to fight.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You'll go out of your way today to explain something to those whose minds don't seem able to grasp the significance of what is going on. It will be worth the effort.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You believe anything is possible, and no doubt it is, but you would still be wise not to take anything for granted, especially where there may be money at stake.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You will make all the right moves today — and even if you do somehow make a wrong move it will still turn out right. Venus in your sign will take care of annoyances, both major and minor, over the next few days.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Is someone bent on causing you harm? Or is it just your imagination working overtime again? Most likely it's the latter, so stop thinking that the world is out to get you and start living your life free from fear.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
No matter how badly someone behaved and how much they let you down you'll find it impossible to get mad. It's good to forgive but don't let rivals think you're going soft!

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
You'll breeze through life with the greatest of ease today, especially on the work front where everyone wants to smooth your path. Enjoy it while you can as it's unlikely to last.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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